



## Disaster and Emergency Management Resources

### Terrorism

The Department of Defense defines terrorism as “the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.” The threat of terrorism is ever-present, and an attack is likely to occur when least expected. Combating terrorism requires a continuous state of awareness.

While crimes of terrorism may appear to be random, the attacks make sense to those terrorists. One goal of terrorist attacks is to draw publicity. Unfortunately, every possible target cannot be protected at all times.

#### *Hazard Terminology*

***Terrorism*** – the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.

Following are some of the actions West Virginia agencies have taken to improve anti-terrorism plans and homeland security. Most of these actions were initiated following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon buildings on Sept. 11, 2001.

- The West Virginia Office of Emergency Services (WVOES) has developed an annex to the State Emergency Operations Plan, which details the steps to be taken in the event of a terrorist attack in West Virginia or a neighboring state that may affect West Virginia interests. Additional information regarding terrorism can be obtained by reviewing Annex T of the State Emergency Operations Plan.
- The West Virginia Watch Program, authorized by the governor, encourages citizens to report suspicious activities around the state’s critical infrastructure (e.g., rivers, bridges, chemical plants, and water treatment plants) to the State Police.
- WVOES has prepared and distributed an emergency preparedness booklet, “Getting Ready: A Family Emergency Guide,” to all counties.
- WVOES has acquired a new Mobile Command Center to respond more speedily and efficiently to disasters such as terrorist incidents. This vehicle is equipped with state-of-the-art communications systems, including telephones, satellite, Internet, and video, and has the resources for self-sustaining field operations. The WVOES has also acquired an enhanced portable radio tower communication system called the EPICS 219 System.

- The Centers for Disease Control and the Health Resource and Service Administration have provided a \$10 million grant to the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) to develop an effective state public health threat response system.

The presence of “hate” groups or similar extreme organizations can be taken as a measure of the likelihood of a terrorist attack. The Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Project counted 708 active hate groups in the United States in 2002. Those listed for West Virginia are the Knight Riders of the Ku Klux Klan, National Association for the Advancement of White People, National Alliance, Resistance Records, Imperial Klans of America, and Liberty Bell Publications. No figures were given for the number of members in each group.

In addition to the identified hate groups, statistics indicate that violence still plagues about 25 percent of the nation’s abortion clinics. Most recently, ecological terrorists, extreme animal rights activists, and anti-economic development terrorist organizations have been active.